

Celibacy of Priests



David Michael Curtis

Does the Bible Teach the Celibacy of Priests?

Comparing Roman Catholicism & the Holy KJV Bible
Without Commentary, May the Holy Ghost & the Readers Conscience Be His Guide



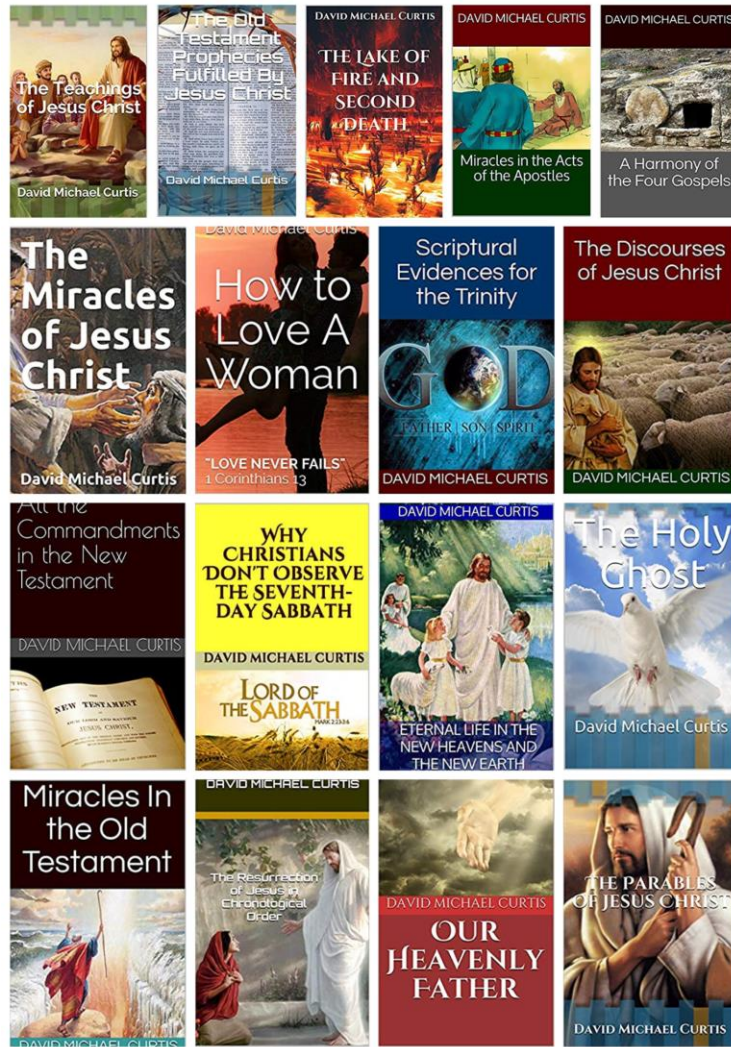
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2034 NW Genes Little Acres Ave
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***About the Author,
David Michael Curtis (1974-Present)***



I am a sinner saved by God's grace. I have been baptized, and I confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of my sins and the gift of eternal life.

I was born in Roseburg, Oregon. I became a Christian at age 19 in 1993. Over the next seven years, I wore out the bindings of eleven KJV Bibles. Using my own money, I conducted my first evangelistic crusade in 1999. I taught the Bible on the radio five days a week on K.O.R.E. Springfield, OR (2000-2002). I sold KJV Bibles and children's character-building books door to door in Washington, Oregon, California, Texas, Kansas, Georgia, Tennessee, and New York (1999-2007).

I was a volunteer chaplain for a maximum-security prison in Northern California (2005-2007). Since 2001, I have owned/managed 75+ Christian websites. From 2008 to 2010, I was the General Manager for Harvestime Books (an international Christian publishing house). I have also served the church as an elder, a new believer's class teacher, and a vacation Bible school teacher.

A Helpful Illustration Describing this Topical Bible Study eBook

The tallest trees in the world are the Redwoods in Northern California. The Redwoods share a single network of roots; this root system connects **all** the Redwoods trees. This means the Redwoods Forest is also the largest single living organism in the world.

Imagine that each doctrine of the Bible is a giant Redwood tree supported by 30-40 roots (Bible verses). Examine the neighboring doctrines that share a root system (Bible verses) with that doctrine. Understand that under its surface, all the doctrines are connected by one massive root system within the Bible. My books *show how the various doctrines interconnect and share the same roots, supporting and depending on each other.*

My books use the Bible as its own interpreter, providing all the verses on whichever doctrine is being studied, topically arranged, without commentary. Christ is the only Teacher you need. He promised that you would know the truth, and the truth would set you free.

The 1994 "Catechism of the Catholic Church"

"All the ordained ministers of the Latin Church, with the exception of permanent deacons, are normally chosen from among men of faith who live a celibate life and who intend to remain celibate 'for the sake of the kingdom of heaven'... Celibacy is a sign of this new life to the service of which the Church's minister is consecrated; accepted with a joyous heart celibacy radiantly proclaims the Reign of God."

The 1994 "Catechism of the Catholic Church" #1579

It is not good that the man should be alone

"... the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Genesis 2:18

Simon's wife's mother

Matthew 8:14 ¶ And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

Mark 1:30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.

Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife

1 Corinthians 9:5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and *as* the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

Marriage is honorable

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

He that is able to receive it, let him receive it

Matthew 19:12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. **He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.**

Revelation 14:1-5 ¶ And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. **These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.** These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for **I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.**

But every man hath his proper gift of God

1 Corinthians 7:7 For I would that all men were even as I myself. **But every man hath his proper gift of God**, one after this manner, and another after that.

The unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord

1 Corinthians 7:32-34 But I would have you without carefulness. **He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:** But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please *his* wife. *There is difference also between a wife and a virgin.* **The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit:** but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please *her* husband.

Let no man beguile you of your reward

Colossians 2:18-23 **Let no man beguile you of your reward** in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, **why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;)** after the commandments and doctrines of men? **Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.**

Seducing spirits, doctrines of devils; forbidding to marry

1 Timothy 4:1-5 ¶ Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; **Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats**, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife

1 Timothy 3:1-13 ¶ This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. **A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;** (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. *Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.* ¶ **Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;** Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless. **Even so must their wives be grave**, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. **Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.** For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Titus 1:6-9 ¶ If any be blameless, **the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God;** not selfwilled, not soon angry, **not given to wine**, no striker, **not given to filthy lucre;** But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, **sober**, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

QUESTION: Does the Bible Teach the Celibacy of Priests?

gotquestions.org

ANSWER:

This is an interesting question to answer, as the Bible does not even teach that there are to be “priests” in the New Covenant established by Christ. Please read our articles on the “priesthood of believers” and “confession of sin to a priest” for more information. The Bible addresses the celibacy of church leaders but not the celibacy of priests.

In regard to the celibacy of church leaders, in 1 Corinthians chapter 7, the apostle Paul teaches, “An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord’s affairs — how he can please the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world — how he can please his wife — and his interests are divided” (1 Corinthians 7:32-34). In some instances, celibacy has a positive impact on ministry. If a church leader is free from spousal and familial responsibilities, he can better focus on ministering to others. Jesus mentions some becoming “eunuchs” for the kingdom of God (Matthew 19:12). Celibacy is definitely allowed for church leaders, and to a certain degree, it is encouraged. However, Scripture requires celibacy for those serving in positions of church leadership.

In 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9, the Apostle Paul seems to assume that elders, bishops, overseers, and deacons will be married. Notice the phrases “the husband of one wife” (1 Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6), “he must manage his own family well” (1 Timothy 3:4, 12), and “his children obey him with proper respect” (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6). On a related issue, please read our article on whether these Scriptures mean that a church leader must be married and have children. While these Scriptures are not a requirement for church leaders to be married, they most definitely present an allowance for church leaders to be married. It is, therefore, anti-biblical for any church to require celibacy of its leaders.

Why, then, does the Roman Catholic Church (and a few other Christian denominations) require the celibacy of priests /church leaders? The celibacy of priests has an interesting history. The first official church statements requiring celibacy appeared at the Councils of Elvira (A.D. 306) and Carthage (A.D. 390), although clerical celibacy, to a lesser degree, definitely predated these councils. Ultimately, though, celibacy became the official requirement of the Roman Catholic Church due to the practice of nepotism. Church leaders were giving their children positions in the church despite a lack of any qualifications or training. Further, church leaders were giving church property to their descendants. As a result, the Roman Catholic Church mandated celibacy in order to keep its priests from having familial attachments, which made nepotism attractive.

Again, the Bible encourages but does not demand the celibacy of priests/church leaders. In fact, Paul recognizes that most church leaders will be married. The Roman Catholic requirement of celibacy is a sad example of the Church taking something that the Bible encourages and transforming it into a requirement in order to protect its interests. Sadder still is the damage that has been done as a result of the Roman Catholic Church’s anti-biblical requirements. Men whom God has not gifted or called to be celibate (1 Corinthians 7:7) are being required to be celibate, and the result is tremendous failures in the areas of adultery, fornication, and the sexual abuse of children.